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Submission Guidelines

• Manuscripts should be double-spaced throughout (including quotations, endnotes, and works cited), with standard margins. Please save copies of anything you send us. We cannot return any materials to authors.

• In general, manuscripts for articles should be no more than 10 to 15 double-spaced, typed pages in length (approximately 2,500 to 3,750 words).

• Provide a statement guaranteeing that the manuscript has not been published or submitted elsewhere.

• Ensure that the manuscript conforms to the NCTE Guidelines for Gender-Fair Use of Language. (See address below.)

• Number all pages.

• Use in-text documentation, following the current edition of the MLA Handbook. Where applicable, a list of works cited and any other bibliographic information should also follow MLA style.

English Journal is refereed, and virtually all manuscripts are read by two or more outside reviewers. We will attempt to reach a decision on each article within five months. The decision on pieces submitted in response to a specific call for manuscripts will be made after the call deadline.

Prospective contributors should obtain a copy of the NCTE Guidelines for Gender-Fair Use of Language from the NCTE website at http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/genderfairuseoflang.

The Standards Movement: A Recent History

Deadline: March 15, 2014
Publication Date: November 2014

For better or for worse, today’s educational culture is dominated by the effects of standards, standardization, and high-stakes testing. To the novice educator, it may seem as if this is the norm—that, in a sense, it has always been this way. But the reform movement we are witnessing today has been in the making for decades: from the first state-level tests administered in the 1970s, to the development of state standards in the 1980s and 1990s, to the implementation of the testing requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), to the linking of student performance and teacher evaluation spawned by Race to the Top (RTTT), to the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, public education has been moving inexorably toward standards and standardization.

We seek articles that reveal—from personal or historical perspectives—the experiences of educators who have struggled, and are still struggling, with the impact of the standards movement.

What can you contribute to a better understanding of the standards movement? How has the standards movement affected you and your students? What are your earliest recollections of the movement? Were you involved in the early state testing activities and, if so, how did those experiences affect your teaching? How did the adoption of your state’s standards change your classroom practices in terms of content and pedagogy? Did your curriculum narrow or expand? How has the testing system in your state and school district changed since NCLB and RTTT? Have there been tangible benefits from the standardization of the curriculum? What, if anything, has been lost in the standards movement? Do the Common Core State Standards represent a solution or a problem? What are your experiences over the years with high-stakes testing? Have they helped your students meet the prescribed standards? How have those tests changed the way you teach? How have they changed your relationships with your students?

Rethinking “Adolescence” to Reimagine English

Guest Editors: Sophia Taliana Sarigianides, Mark A. Lewis, and Robert Petrone

Submission Deadline: May 15, 2014
Publication Date: January 2015

For a field intent upon dispelling stereotypes tied to race, gender, sexuality, physical ability, and other social categories, we have yet to sufficiently examine how we view adolescence and how these views affect how we teach English. Typical ways of thinking about adolescence come from biological and psychological understandings (e.g., raging hormones, identity crisis). These lenses prevail in our thinking, representing the adolescent as a moody, self-centered, peer-oriented being who is different from adults in distinct ways. These deficit orientations position youth passively, present their life circumstances as demeaning, and fail to account for seeing this category, like others, as a social construct.

In an effort to challenge and change how representations of and assumptions about youth function in English language arts, this themed issue solicits manuscripts that push the field to rethink its dominant paradigms of youth. We are particularly interested in manuscripts that consider the following questions: How does thinking of adolescence as culturally constructed generate new, distinct readings of young adult texts? How might the rethinking of adolescence create fresh approaches for reading and teaching canonical texts? How have you used ideas of youth as a construct in secondary school settings, especially with students? How have you explored such ideas with preservice and inservice teachers? What challenges have you experienced in attempting to shift dominant understanding of “adolescence/adolescents”?

As guest editors of this themed issue, we are interested in this topic because of our recent work establishing what we refer to as a youth lens. Imagined as a lens intended to sit alongside feminist, queer, Marxist, and postcolonial approaches, this youth lens views adolescence as a construct and calls attention to and critiques representations of youth.

For those interested in reading more about a youth lens, please contact the guest editors at ssarigianides@westfield.ma.edu.

Poetry: Rhyme and Reason

Submission Deadline: July 15, 2014
Publication Date: March 2015

To paraphrase Ciardi and Williams, “How does a poem mean?” (1959). Poetry brings into sharp relief the contradictions of teaching English language arts: Do we teach skills or content? Information or critical literacy? Do we seek proficiency or elicit passion? These questions are persistently intertwined and cannot be disentangled any more than we can separate ourselves from our work. Like teaching, poetry is intensely human, social, and personal. It involves sound and sense, trust and trouble, beauty and pain; and like our students, poetry can make us laugh, cry, and bang our heads against a wall. A poem offers promise and release. Poetry haunts our dreams.

For this issue, we seek research-based articles that explore questions such as these: How does the power and possibility of...
poetry intersect with classroom life? How can teachers help students connect with poetry and understand its cultural relevance as a force for speaking truth to power? Where does the teaching of poetry fit in the current culture of standardization? How can poetry be used to motivate students to explore contemporary issues? How can poetry help us find meaning in everyday moments? How does poetry—contemporary and classic—inspire and energize you in your work? In short, how does a poem mean for you? Note: If your submission refers to a particular poem, you must secure permission for its publication or limit direct quotes from a poem to no more than two lines.

General Interest
May submit any time
We publish articles of general interest as space is available. You may submit manuscripts on any topic that will appeal to EJ readers. Remember that EJ articles foreground classroom practice and contextualize it in sound research and theory. As you know, EJ readers appreciate articles that show real students and teachers in real classrooms engaged in authentic teaching and learning. Regular manuscript guidelines regarding length and style apply.

Speaking My Mind
We invite you to speak out on an issue that concerns you about English language arts teaching and learning. If your essay is published, it will appear with your photo in a future issue of English Journal. We welcome essays of 1,000 to 1,500 words, as well as inquiries regarding possible subjects.

Original Photography
Teacher photographs of classroom scenes and individual students are welcome. Photographs may be sent as 8” x 10” black-and-white glossies or as an electronic file in a standard image format at 300 dpi. Photos should be accompanied by complete identification: teacher/photographer’s name, location of scene, and date photograph was taken. If faces are clearly visible, names of those photographed should be included, along with their statement of permission for the photograph to be reproduced in EJ.

Original Cartoons
Cartoons should depict scenes or ideas potentially amusing to English language arts teachers. Line drawings in black ink should be submitted on 8½” x 11” unlined paper and be signed by the artist.

Columns and Column Editors
Carpe Librum: Seize the (YA) Book
Editor: Pauline Skowron Schmidt
“The stories we love best live in us forever.”—J. K. Rowling
“We shouldn’t teach great books; we should teach a love of reading.”—B. F. Skinner
This column hopes to serve as a space dedicated to conversation about young adult literature. This genre of literature is unique; award-winners in this field push boundaries and make us uncomfortable . . . just as adolescents sometimes do. I hope to celebrate adolescents, their reading, and their experiences by reviewing the texts that engage them. I also hope readers will share their expertise about YA lit.

How can we use YA literature to inspire our students to read? What YA books link particularly well with required content—in English classrooms and across disciplines? Which YA title do you wish was “required reading” for all high school English teachers? Which YA texts can help teachers as we seek to connect students with the “right” book at the “right” time?

Submissions to this column are welcome. Contributors can submit a review (750-word maximum) or suggest a YA book to add to our never-ending pile! Please send submissions as attachments to Pauline Skowron Schmidt at pschmidt@wcupa.edu.

Continuous Becoming: Moving toward Mastery
Editors: Victoria P. Hankey and Dawn L. Ryan
Mastery in teaching is not a destination; it is a principle that guides professionals toward continuous improvement. Good teaching is never static. In this dynamic profession, educators are responsible for meeting the needs of students whose futures are yet to be defined. The best teachers never stop being students themselves, and each teacher’s professional journey is unique. The common thread is the guidance we can offer one another.

Learning to teach well begins with the desire to make a difference for students. That desire often gets lost in the realities of classroom life. There is no roadmap to mastery. This column invites novices, veterans, and everyone in between to share significant experiences that have enhanced their craft. What has made you a better teacher? How do you stay invested? How do you project professionalism in this era of high scrutiny? What professional options exist for growth, leadership, and advancement in education? How do you cultivate relationships to obtain the support you need?

The goal is to offer suggestions, ideas, and experiences to help teachers discover their own roadmaps toward mastery. Please send submissions of 1,200–2,000 words to Victoria Hankey@bvsd.org. Inquiries and suggestions for future columns are also welcome.

Cover to Cover: Texts That Guide Practice
Editor: Jeanette Toomer
This column invites book reviews from writers, researchers, and educators on how minds—of teachers and students—can be opened by books and reading. Reviews that consider literacy instruction practices from classroom teachers and community educators are welcome. The editor seeks book reviews that explore successful reading and writing programs as well as practices for inservice teachers and for students.

This column also invites reviews of multicultural and bilingual books and curriculum programs that seek to address the needs of English Language Learners. Our cover to cover initiative aims to reach out to all racial, ethnic, and cultural groups to report on effective literacy instruction, differentiation strategies, and ways to improve learning and achievement for students across the curriculum.

Questions to consider for submissions include the following: What books have informed teaching and learning of literacy practices? What texts have helped me become a more culturally responsive educator? What texts and models have strengthened my professional knowledge of instruction and assessment?

Submissions should be 800–1,200 words and must include full bibliographic reference information of the text reviewed. Send submissions and queries to Jeanette Toomer at jtoomer@dramsdiscoveryandlearning.com.
Disabling Assumptions
Editor: Patricia A. Dunn

This column seeks submissions addressing how a disability studies perspective in English language arts can address disabling assumptions and make our society more inclusive for everyone. The interdisciplinary field of disability studies explores assumptions about disability in our society. It examines how society sometimes constructs architectural or attitudinal barriers that exclude people with disabilities. Stairs disable people who use wheelchairs. Ramps and elevators bypass the stairs that are the true disablers. Like stairs, some teaching practices inadvertently construct barriers to learners who are deaf or blind, or who are on the autism spectrum, or who learn differently. This column will explore teaching practices that can work like ramps and elevators to provide better access to all.

In an English class, a disability studies perspective would help teachers and students pose more critical questions about stereotypical depictions of characters with disabilities. It would help us select texts that show well-developed characters with agency and voice. It would listen to the voices of people with disabilities, encouraging literary, artistic, or other productions. It would help us design research projects, assessments, and modes of delivery that allow more students to live up to their full potential.

We invite readers to address questions such as these: What texts are you reading that depict characters with disabilities living well-rounded lives? How can disability-themed material help all students explore how students with disability are excluded or seen as “other” in the classroom or schoolyard? (This exploration is not merely to invoke sympathy or pity for “them,” but instead to help students and teachers see disability as a “normal” part of the human condition.) How can classic or canonical texts that depict stereotypical characters be resisted or questioned so that these stereotypes are not re-inscribed? What are the stories of teachers with disabilities? To paraphrase the Universal Design for Learning Guidelines, what are some multiple ways of engaging students, representing material, or having students produce a variety of texts?

Inquiries, submissions, or suggestions for future columns should be directed to Patricia A. Dunn at Patricia.Dunn@stonybrook.edu. Submissions of 800–1,200 words should be sent as an attachment.

Envisioning Assessment
Editor: Jed Hopkins

Practices, done in the name of assessment, have made an undeniable impact on the work of teachers and the way students experience school.

Imagine a different world!

This column invites us to explore the roles assessment might be playing in the “bureaucratization” of our education system and entertain an ideal educational world where assessment is supportive of education; where teachers and departments are not pressured to teach to the test; where the crafting of assessment is understood to be creative, useful, productive, and owned equally by students, parents, and teachers; and where the default form of assessment is always authentic.

What would such schooling and teaching look like? What situations embody or threaten such an ideal? Can assessment be dialogical—a truly mutual experience for students and teachers? Can we help students to be responsible for assessing their own learning? How can we prevent the potential for toxic effects of standardized assessment (or any form of assessment, for that matter)?

This column invites discussion and a sharing of experiences, real or imagined, that might help us collectively take back the educational meaning and potential of assessment; to start to understand it less as a science (for accountability and sorting) and more as an art (for promoting human and humane possibilities).

Submit an electronic Word file attached to your email to the column editor, Jed Hopkins, at jhopkins@edgewood.edu. Contributors are encouraged to query the column editor and share drafts of column ideas as part of the submission process.

Lingua Anglia: Bridging Language and Learners
Editor: Pamela J. Hickey

As teachers and students, we bring the languages of our communities into schools. However, the language of academics, professions, and power and access is Standard English. As our student populations continue to grow in cultural and linguistic diversity, it is imperative that we find meaningful, equitable, and culturally relevant ways to support all students in their acquisition of Standard English. Research demonstrates that effective teachers value students’ home languages and welcome them as a bridge to Standard English development.

As we move forward into this linguistically rich and diverse world, we are all learners. There is much we can learn from our students, including those who speak languages or language varieties other than Standard English. Additionally, as English teachers we are all teachers of language. This column provides an opportunity to explore questions such as: How do diverse classrooms affect English language learning for all students? What kinds of reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities can bridge the gap between home language and Standard English? How can language learning be culturally responsive and academically challenging?

This column seeks to discuss critical, transformative, and powerful ways to support students’ acquisition of Standard English. Narratives, discussions of epiphany and teacher-learning, and culturally relevant and critical suggestions for Standard English support are welcome.

Submit an electronic Word file attached to your email, subject heading: Lingua Anglia, to Pamela J. Hickey at hickeyp@newpaltz.edu. Contributors are encouraged to query the column editor and share drafts of column ideas as part of the submission process.

Poetry
Editor: Nancy C. Krim

In Lu-Chi’s Wen Fu: The Art of Writing, the first arts poetica of China, we find this: “When the vein of jade is revealed in the rock, / the whole mountain glistens.” In his poem “Juggler,” Richard Wilbur writes: “It takes a sky-blue juggler with five red balls / To shake our gravity up.” Finally, scribbling inside a cell in Bedlam, Christopher Smart gave us: “For echo is the soul of the voice exciting itself in hollow places.”

Poets who teach, teachers who write, students are all invited to submit well-crafted poems to EJ. Choose those that seem a fit, either explicitly or implicitly, with announced themes of upcoming issues. We welcome new voices. We do not consider previously published poems or simultaneous submissions.

Call for Manuscripts, continued
Send by email attachment, for blind review, up to five poems with only phone number and initials on the page. In your email message, include brief biographical information. Poets whose work is published will receive two copies of the issue in which their work appears. Send submissions to ejpoetry2013@gmail.com. Send correspondence to Nancy Krim at nkrim6m@gmail.com.

Soft(a)ware in the English Classroom
Editor: Tom Liam Lynch

Over the last decade, software has become ubiquitous in both our personal and professional lives. More and more, we share, shop, work, and learn in online spaces. Software powers these spaces.

In schools, emphasis has been placed on using data systems to track student achievement, to expand online courses, and to leverage new devices in instruction. Software powers these spaces as well.

Though we don’t often talk about it explicitly, we are all empowered and encumbered by software in our everyday lives. Given the cultural ubiquity of software (and the ever-increasing political encouragement it is receiving), we need to talk openly and critically about the ways software affects our lives as teachers, administrators, and learners.

This column is devoted to identifying the ways in which our teaching and learning lives are influenced by software. We focus on a single question: How does software both enable and inhibit our professional practices? Each column will offer a vignette based on readers’ professional experiences with software as well as a critical look at what the software enables and inhibits.

Contributors are encouraged to contact the column editor and share drafts of column ideas as part of the submission process. Please submit an electronic Word file attached to your email to the column editor, Tom Liam Lynch, at tom@tomliamlynch.org.

Speaking Truth to Power
Editor: P. L. Thomas

“If education cannot do everything, there is something fundamental that it can do. In other words, if education is not the key to social transformation, neither is it simply meant to reproduce the dominant ideology. . . . The freedom that moves us, that makes us take risks, is being subjugated to a process of standardization of formulas, models against which we are evaluated. . . . We are speaking of that invisible power of alienating domestication, which attains a degree of extraordinary efficiency in what I have been calling the bureaucratizing of the mind” (110–11). (Freire, 1998, Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage)

This column seeks to explore the experiences and possibilities that arise when educators speak Truth to power. It is also intended to be an avenue for teachers to speak Truth to power through teacher narratives about “the bureaucratizing of the mind,” about best practice in critical literacy against scripted and tested literacy, and about creating classrooms that invite students to discover, embrace, and develop their own voices and empowerment.

Submit an electronic Word file attached to your email to the column editor, P. L. Thomas, at paul.thomas@furman.edu.

A Thousand Writers: Voices of the NWP
Editor: Tanya Baker

Writing is a complex, personal act. Writing is hard. Writing can be improved with patience and practice. None of these truths about writing are necessarily self-evident. Writing project teachers learn these truths through their own experiences of having something to say, trying to say it, and then revising and editing to bring their writing as close to their expectations as they can.

Experiencing the act of writing as a writer has a profound effect on our understanding of what it takes for students to accomplish this complex act. It creates a more knowledgeable, but also a more responsive and empathetic, teacher of other writers.

Perhaps most importantly, writing regularly teaches us that the act of writing is as important as the production of any single text. As writing project director Bob Yagelski put it in A Thousand Writers Writing, “writing is a potentially powerful vehicle for transformation, for it opens up possibilities for awareness, reflection, and inquiry that writing as an act of textual production does not necessarily do. Writing in the moment, I have come to realize, has the capacity to change us.”

Teachers who experience the transformation of the writing act are likely to provide many, many opportunities for students to write. Their students learn to write to find out what they have to say, not just to say what the teacher expects them to say. They learn that writing allows them to reflect on their experiences, to slow down their thinking, to stop and ask questions.

This column seeks to explore the experiences of National Writing Project teachers as writers, teachers of writing, and educational leaders. Do you have a story of transformation through writing? Of powerful pedagogical practice? Of leadership?

Submit an electronic Word file attached to your email to the column editor, Tanya Baker, at tbaker@nwp.org. Please indicate the Writing Project with which you are affiliated. Contributors are encouraged to query the column editor and share drafts of column ideas as part of the submission process.